WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of treating an individual having a severe burn, comprising the step of administering to said individual a pharmacologically effective dose of a beta-adrenergic antagonist.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein said beta-adrenergic antagonist is administered intravenously.

3. The method of claim 2, wherein said beta-adrenergic antagonist is administered in a dose that decrease heart rate in said individual by about 25%.

4. The method of claim 2, wherein said beta-adrenergic antagonist is administered in a dose of from about 0.1 mg/kg of the body weight of the individual to about 10 mg/kg of the body weight of the individual.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein said beta-adrenergic antagonist is selected from the group consisting of propranolol, timolol, nadolol, atenolol, metoprolol, esmolol, nipradilol, carvedilol and acebutolol.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein said beta-adrenergic antagonist is propranolol.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein said propranolol is administered intraveneously in a dose of about 1 mg/kg of the body.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein said beta-adrenergic antagonist decreases lean mass catabolism in said individual.

9. A method of treating an individual having a severe burn, comprising the step of administering to said individual a pharmacologically effective dose of propranolol.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein said propranolol is administered intravenously.

11. The method of claim 9, wherein said propranolol is administered in a dose that decrease heart rate in said individual by about 25%.

12. The method of claim 9, wherein said propranolol is administered in a dose of from about 0.1 mg/kg of the body weight of the individual to about 10 mg/kg of the body weight of the individual.

13. The method of claim 9, wherein said propranolol decreases lean mass catabolism in said individual.

14. A method of decreasing protein catabolism and increasing lean body mass in an individual, comprising the step of administering to said individual a pharmacologically effective dose of a beta-adrenergic antagonist.

15. The method of claim 14, wherein said beta-adrenergic antagonist is administered intravenously.

16. The method of claim 15, wherein said beta-adrenergic antagonist is administered in a dose that decrease heart rate in said individual by about 25%.

17. The method of claim 15, wherein said beta-adrenergic antagonist is administered in a dose of from about 0.1

mg/kg of the body weight of the individual to about 10 mg/kg of the body weight of the individual.

18. The method of claim 14, wherein said beta-adrenergic antagonist is selected from the group consisting of propranolol, timolol, nadolol, atenolol, metoprolol, esmolol, nipradilol, carvedilol and acebutolol.

19. The method of claim 14, wherein said beta-adrenergic antagonist is propranolol.

20. The method of claim 14, wherein said propranolol is administered intraveneously in a dose of about 1 mg/kg of the body.